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## ACADEMIC SYMPOSIUM ON METHODOLOGICAL DETERMINANTS OF GENERAL SECURITY



On 21 April 2022, the War Studies University hosted an academic symposium on methodological determinants of general security. The event was organised by the State Security Institute in the Faculty of National Security, under an ongoing research project titled "Methodological Determinants of National (State) Security".<sup>1</sup> The symposium served to enable scholarly discussion of contemporary perceptions of general security, changes of priorities, and challenges in academic research. It featured a professorial debate chaired by Dr Bogdan Michailiuk. Speakers included Dr Marian Żuber,<sup>2</sup> Dr Andrzej Pieczywok,<sup>3</sup> Dr Janusz Ropski,<sup>4</sup> Dr Krzysztof Drabik,<sup>5</sup> and Dr Paweł Gromek.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The symposium was organised by the Department of General Security in the State Security Institute of the Faculty of National Security at the War Studies University, Warsaw.

<sup>2</sup> Marian Żuber DEng, associate professor at Wrocław University of Environmental and Life Sciences.

<sup>3</sup> Dr Andrzej Pieczywok, associate professor at Kazimierz Wielki University in Bydgoszcz.

<sup>4</sup> Dr Janusz Ropski, associate professor at the Pedagogical University of Kraków.

<sup>5</sup> Dr Krzysztof Drabik, associate professor at Siedlce University of Natural Sciences and Humanities.

<sup>6</sup> Paweł Gromek DEng, associate professor at the Central Fire Service School in Warsaw.

The debate concerned three key questions relevant to the shape of current and proposed scientific research in the area of general security, namely: (1) What should determine the limits of the definition of general security – does it concern legally protected goods resulting from accepted international obligations, arising from alliances and the Republic of Poland's membership of international organisations, or perhaps values and interests derived from primary supranational principles, often viewed as “natural rights”; and are these legally protected goods under the Constitution? (2) Is or should the notion of general security be universal in nature, or should it be determined by a dynamic perception conditioned by historical experience and current existential threats to the state and its organs? (3) What are the key needs of academic research in the area of general security and the limitations on the dissemination of its results, and what are the roles of historical research, comparative studies, an inter- and multidisciplinary research?

Addressing the first topic, the determinants of general security, the chairman **Dr Bogdan Michailiuk** suggested that consideration should first be given to the question of the limits of the definition of general security.

**Marian Żuber** referred to the first question while at the same time alluding to the second question, because in that question, in relation to the first problem of what the limits of general security should be, the speaker relied on analysis that has been conducted for many years on the subject of general security. He cited the authority of Professor Waldemar Kitler, who defines or places general security among the four pillars of national security, alongside military security, public security, and system security. He continued: “Such an understanding of this kind of security is most certainly justified and proper.” Also in his teaching he bases his material on these views as presented by Professor Kitler. He certainly regards general security as one of the most important issues related to the functioning of the state. He posed the question: “Should it follow from these constitutional principles? That is, Article 5, which concerns the role of the state in ensuring the security of citizens, and refers to the provision of security and the principles of environmental protection in accordance with the principle of sustainable development.”

“It is said that the state cares about the security of its citizens. This has been written in a generalised way. The next question is: Should this depend on international determinants, or should it be included in the principles of natural law?” He went on: “These are undoubtedly related to each other, because it is impossible to separate what has been established in

international law, especially in the law that we have adopted and ratified, and so the state has committed itself to upholding these principles – which also concern general security. General security in the sense of the definitions that appear in discussions of security conceived in a general way, and therefore related to the security of citizens and the emergence of possible natural or technical threats. All international laws adopted by our country should also constitute an element that will determine the scope of security.” He indicated that the first question should be linked to the second, because there “we are considering how universal the definition and understanding of general security should be.” Moving to the second question, the speaker expressed the view that “the scope of general security should also be determined by what are new challenges, new threats that are emerging in the human environment, and should also determine this definition of general security for the future.” He added that “if today we are talking about energy security as an element of economic security, it is in the context, for example, of the conflict in Ukraine, where we have serious problems with ensuring energy security. This is an important element in the discussion of general security.”

**Andrzej Pieczywok** stated at the outset: “Today it turns out that in universities we do many different things, but we forget about something like security and what is happening as regards human security.” He acknowledged that it is now necessary to define what general security is. “I would not like to cite the example of what is happening in Ukraine, because very often we take advantage of such a situation, while at the same time learning from what we see in media reports. We need to talk today about human security, because that is where security seems to slip away. Very often we talk about systemic or structural security. And yet it is the person that is, as we see today, the most important subject, showing that security, when we define what it is and who it concerns, turns out fundamentally to concern only the human figure.”

The speaker then drew attention to several issues, including the ongoing war, but also other issues also related to human capabilities and behaviour in the face of such a situation. “It turns out that we teach some things related to human security in peaceful situations, but war teaches us that we as humans, unfortunately, are not able to picture how we should behave. Because threats that seemed to be far away from us turn out to be very close to us.” He added that another issue should be given attention: a legal one. “And please picture to yourselves that we have a problem. I am talking about myself as well. We teach courses related to security with topics such as civil defence and the protection of the population. For me, what is happening in Ukraine is a good example. Of certain shortcomings that arise precisely from legal instruments

such as those in effect in our country. Such as the law that our politicians here and our government have presented as a law on defence of the homeland. I was looking today for a few issues that are unfortunately very urgent, and are not necessarily addressed by this law. Please note that I observe the situation based not only on media reports, but also on the reports of authentic people who are with us in Poland from Ukraine. There are issues of protection of the population. Because today we are talking about those things that are very important. And please note that the questions that the professor has raised today reduce primarily to certain human behaviours. And these human behaviours result from the fact that indeed there are no legal instruments influencing people's ability to behave in the face of this disaster, this catastrophe; they are nothing in relation to legal instruments, because a legal instrument does not in fact show us the situation as it is, since we very often make preparations for action in situations where nothing is threatening us. But the message is completely different; a deformation of reality takes place." The speaker continued: "The COVID situation that arose in our country and around the world resulted in the fact that certain legal instruments, extremely important, which should have been in place for at least three or four years, were enacted only in the reality of the pandemic. The same applies to the defence of the civil population, but also to crisis management. In Ukraine, we have seen improvisation in this area. Both during the war and earlier, when Ukraine expected that a large-scale conflict could erupt at any time. However, the public was not prepared. Feverish preparations began only at the last minute. Despite this, the war resulted in many civilian casualties, which resulted from, among other things, the failure to prepare for the general protection of the population. If the professor will allow me to cite such an example, which is very close to my heart, I will say that this unpreparedness was a result of not appreciating the reality of the situation." **Dr Pieczywok** went on to say that "in the organisational structures of counties or municipalities there is rarely a post available for anyone wishing to deal with matters of the protection of the population." He gave the example of a reserve colonel, passionate about security issues, employed in a municipal office. Initially, his enthusiastic work was well received by the other people employed at the office, as it relieved them of duties related to the local authority's defence responsibilities. Over time, however, that enthusiasm began to disturb some of the employees, as the alarms and drills somehow forced them out of their blissful state where they could cast the possibility of war out of their mind. After presenting this example, the speaker expanded on the issue of education and awareness. "I think that, despite everything, we should draw conclusions from the current

situation. I say 'we' in the sense of 'we, the civilian population', because those who deal with strategy also deal with the tactics of operations. When it comes to the military, we still have the example of Ukraine. I emphasise: we as the civilian population should draw conclusions, because if under this law it is said that we have to build something here, but to build not a security culture – although this is very important, and we have our traditions in this regard – but to build infrastructure for the protection of the population, such as shelters.” Finally, **Dr Pieczywok** noted that Ukraine was decidedly better prepared than Poland. It had more facilities capable of protecting the civilian population, and in spite of that it suffered huge losses among its people from air, missile and artillery strikes. Therefore, I believe that we should not wait for regulatory instruments, but act locally. I have contact with many municipalities and counties. In order to prepare for my classes on civil protection issues, I go out into the field. I am sometimes described as a person who tries to check up on local government institutions in this regard. This is not true. I just want to see how things look in reality. I think that not only this conference, but many different such meetings can serve as a catalyst for action: both at the 'higher' level of legal instruments, but also independently of them, we should rather begin to intensify not only our thinking, but also our actions.”

**Krzysztof Drabik** began discussing the issue from a general perspective, indicating that he was intrigued by the very notion of general security, “because I wondered whether the etymology of that term includes the aspect of a subject, does it refer to generality in the sense of some subject? Some general entity, or the generality of threats? Or maybe both. That is, a combination of the subject and object aspects. A certain danger relating to general security is what Professor Pieczywok spoke of earlier. It is like with utilitarianism, perhaps somewhere within this general security we lose sight of the individual subject, that is, personal security is somehow overlooked in favour of the collective subject. Why did I mention utilitarianism? Because a maxim of utilitarianism is 'the greatest happiness of the greatest number'. Perhaps this idea of security for the greatest possible number of people is what is at stake here. Regarding the regulatory aspect, it is good that it has been stated that perhaps general security should be identified with law or with natural rights. It is a good thing that these are being talked about at all, because it is not at all obvious. One might say that there are no such rights at all, including human rights, which have a deep-rooted tradition in our Western culture. But it is not at all so obvious in a global sense.” He continued: “When it comes to the regulatory basis of general security, in the text of national law, in the context of the constitution or international

agreements, the roots of general security should be sought precisely in natural rights. This is similar to the contractualism of John Locke, for example, who says that the legal system of the state should not stand in contradiction to natural rights, which primarily include the rights to life, liberty, and private property. It seems that this line of reasoning could also be applied to general security and its regulatory basis. A deductive approach, that is: from the most general natural rights to the legal system of a particular state. It seems right to highlight what the previous speaker said. When it comes to general security, we have a tendency to taxonomise. This tendency is also reflected in our discussion, since: what are the limits of this form of security? It is difficult to indicate such concrete boundaries. And why? Because we are witnessing the dynamic development of civilisation, and it is difficult to reduce general security even to the matters often classified in this area, such as technical failures or natural disasters.” The speaker also referred to the dynamics of the development of civilisation, which will continue to surprise us with negative effects, namely threats that we shall have to deal with and eliminate in order to continue to function at the desired, or expected, qualitative level. He said that the boundaries are difficult to define exactly; that it is a never-ending process. This is the same as in the probabilistic sciences, of which we are representatives. “It is difficult to identify a single true, objective paradigm which someone might not succeed one day in falsifying, even despite the development of science. It is the same with general security; there will always be new threats, new challenges and related opportunities.”

**Paweł Gromek** noted that “as regards formal questions, it is the provisions of the constitution that are the basic reference point for the role of the state in the context of providing security, including general security. In any case, those provisions are reflected in a number of other legal instruments, considering for example the Acts on fire protection, the National Fire Service, volunteer fire services, and states of natural disaster. Or the bill on protection of the population and states of natural disaster, which is currently in preparation, at least according to announcements from the National Fire Service headquarters and media reports. Considering the legal material concerning general security and its various aspects, it is impossible not to notice the numerous references in this material. We should also refer here not only to documents serving as legal instruments, but also to strategic doctrinal documents relevant to the status of Polish law, such as the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction in 2015–2030 (from the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction). This is a document that refers to issues of disaster risk reduction, with disasters defined as in international

documents, in a manner consistent with what we in Poland treat and define as crisis situations. I believe that these legal aspects correspond closely to each other. We also try to name and define boundaries for what is related to general security from the perspective of an officer of the National Fire Service.” The speaker added that he tries to look at general security “taking into account the category of threat, defining what are firstly the protected values related to that threat, as well as in practical terms, pointing out security entities, services, institutions, inspectorates, guards, non-governmental organisations and organisations not being among the institutions analysed, and others which are dedicated directly to – colloquially speaking – handling these threats or are related to their handling, and taking into account the specific features of general security. These types of threats are among the premises for distinguishing and talking about general security at all. We are speaking here of threats that can occur whether we are thinking of peacetime, crisis, or war in the sense of a military crisis, a political crisis, that is, threats such like floods, fires, chemical hazards, hurricanes, epidemics, or the threat of blackouts being either the cause or the consequence of those previously mentioned.” He went on to say that “from this derives the attribute of the generality of threats, that is, such threats as are experienced by the entities subject to protection, such as individual humans. Their construed social groups, society, the international community, regardless of skin colour, age, religion, gender, social status, nationality, beliefs and others. Which is not to say that these factors do not determine the risks related to general security, at least considering the vulnerability of the elderly, people with limited mobility, children, etc.” **Dr Gromek** added that “it is also worthwhile, in the very context of determining the limits of the definition of general security, to take into account this aspect of the everyday nature of threats, which can arise essentially at any time, not infrequently also unannounced, taking into account that, compared with military threats, for example, it is possible within a certain timeframe to observe certain factors that make a threat of a military nature more likely to occur, with an increase in the associated risk. In the case of the threats to general security that I have mentioned, this seems to be not so obvious, not perceivable so often and to such an extent.” He added that “it is also worth referring to what follows from the nature of the threats to general security, namely the protected values. It is not uncommon in the subject literature find such references to the most important satellite values, namely human life, health, and also human dignity in a broad sense. Given the circumstances necessitating the provision of humanitarian aid and the like, that is, provision of the so-called minimum subsistence for those at risk, and from these issues, that is,

the types of threats, attributes, the generality of threats, their everyday nature, and the protected values that result from them.” **Dr Gromek** concluded: “It is worthwhile, on this basis, to formulate one of the main determinants of the limits of general security. Namely, the nature of the impact of the threats, which consists of the factors that I have mentioned.”

**Janusz Ropski** began by stating that “there are three areas of human life that are most important to a human being: his own person; the social world, and within it those close to him; and the world of values. And then finally such ultimate boundaries as the sacred, suffering, and death.” He then posed the question: “Are the goods legally protected under the Constitution, legally protected goods under the Constitution? I will draw attention to one thing which is very important at the moment, and we are talking about international agreements, we are talking about a certain international law, and when we look at the world as it is functioning at the moment no one observes these laws, and actually we could say that they exist only on paper, because this world functions completely differently. Power is most dangerous when we talk about ‘social’ security in a democratic state. The most dangerous is an authority or institution that makes the law and then fails to obey that law. And now when we look at what is happening in the international arena and often also in Poland, it turns out that we have quite a large problem with this matter of making the law and simultaneously obeying it. Maybe values and goods derived from primary, timeless principles, often perceived as natural rights. At present, this world of values that shows us that we very often talk about security in isolation from threats. We could not talk of security if there were no threats. In practice we have to define those threats. If we didn’t have threats, we would not really be talking about security. What we can see at the moment when we watch these scenes of war, and on the other hand also what is happening on the ground in many countries. I remember Marian Turski’s speech commemorating the liberation of Auschwitz, when he said that Auschwitz did not come out of nowhere, it was just waiting in the wings and made its entrance at a certain point. So what Turski was saying was: let’s not be indifferent, because in fact we are.” The speaker continued: “There is a very narrow line between hate speech and extermination. And this is what we can see right now in Ukraine, what we saw in the Second World War. And what we can very easily notice among such normal threats that emerge in our country and beyond. We point to a social group, we direct hate speech towards it. The consequences are that violence against those people soon follows. After that comes social exclusion, and extermination is a very short time away. That is, looking from the perspective of human nature, and its destructive side, we have



very many things that are completely new. And now we could be thinking all the time about how these new threats are changing.” **Dr Ropski** went on: “We have tried to define these threats, as regards this so-called sense of security, and this is insanely important. When a pandemic erupted and we were thinking about how we should study the threats, what paradigm we should adopt to study them, and suddenly we find that completely different issues arise, different threats. Through this sense of security, we can give very different definitions of matters relating to general security, public security, internal security, social security, but it is extremely important to have the wisdom and knowledge that comes from the ability to find, to define a threat that presents itself to us. That is, we are talking about declarative and procedural knowledge. And now these streams of knowledge about security, namely: anticipate its participation, or anticipate what we read and what is found in books. And let these paradigms very well come into being, because knowledge without science, without theory, does not develop.”

Finally, the speaker referred to the question of “whether given the rights protected by the institutions established for this purpose, the institutions that make the law, we can feel safe when we have seen for a long time the manipulation of knowledge, the manipulation of public information. And this is also what we should start to notice, we as scholars, when there is such a degree of contact with politics. For politicians, the most important thing is their level of support, and they will do anything that is important for maintaining that support. Often we just live in an information bubble, when we don’t know what the reality is. At the moment we are in such a very unpredictable world, which is actually difficult to define. It is hard for us to say unequivocally what is really in store for us. All the time today we talk about the methodology of the study of security, how to perform such studies well. As a researcher in the social sciences, in social security, I do not feel most comfortable at this time, because even known theories are somehow slipping out of our control. These will undoubtedly not be usable, but it is important that we are able to foresee, and not just correctly describe historically what has already happened.

**Bogdan Michailiuk** noted that it is important that there should exist wisdom related to the understanding and perception of threats in the context of general security. He added that “we can conclude that it is not an easy challenge to define unequivocally the different areas of security. We can say this in general with regard to this first question in the context of today's meeting on general security. Unfortunately, difficulties arise from a number of issues related

primarily to the lack of definitions laid down in law. Professor Gromek referred to this issue in detail, the constitutional provisions, but we do not have a clear statement of what general security is, how to define it, like we define military security, local security, and so on. With general security, unfortunately, we have some problems. What does it refer to? Above all, a process and a state. The process includes a number of varied activities. These activities were also described by Professor Waldemar Kitler. Among the components of general security that he mentioned, I would like to draw special attention to the security of people's health and life, but this is not the only problem related to general security. It is a condition related primarily to the protection of human health and life, but also material goods, cultural assets, and the natural environment. Because it is related above all to the range of things necessary for people to survive in certain situations. The protected goods include not only life and health. Goods that are viewed as necessary for the survival of the population cannot be overlooked. We can observe this at present in Ukraine; I am thinking here of water, air, food, animals, property, structures, utilities, but also things that are important because of their spiritual values. These spiritual, religious, patriotic values, that is to say, the picture of the duty to protect that we see in the area of general security becomes clearer to us when we look at the current situation in Ukraine; that is, certain matters are also unfortunately founded on international regulations. Looking realistically at the situation in Ukraine, unfortunately, the international laws on armed conflicts had already become blurred as if on the eve of the war taking place currently in Ukraine. There is the question of whether the notion of general security is or should be universal in nature. It is a perception of general security conditioned by historical experience and current existential threats to the state and its organs that should determine the understanding of this form of security."

**Marian Žuber** stated that "general security is dedicated to a person's health and life, a person's safety among other people. It is good that science is moving forward, because without a theory of science it would not happen that more and more semantic categories are appearing, although on the other hand it is also slightly dangerous for the reason that often the framework is blurred, that is, these forms of security begin to overlap on us, and then we begin to deal with similar events and phenomena." The speaker acknowledged that "in the understanding of general security, the understanding of security, it is the safety of a person among other people. This is defined as interpersonal security. I turn my attention to, I repeat, the safety of a person among people. I am more interested in how that other person can be a threat to the individual."

He concluded: “The science of how an individual has an influence on the thoughts, feelings and behaviours of another person and, on the other hand, when we talk about how those thoughts and behaviours of other people influence the behaviour of the individual. For this reason I would not want to define it, because we have this security paradigm quite well described.”

**Paweł Gromek** said that “defining general security is not a simple task”, and it becomes important to link “general security with current threats of an existential nature to the state and its organs [...] not only concerning the security of people in the sense of citizens, but also the resulting need to ensure the security of entities that operate for the security of citizens, and often have been established for that very purpose.” He pointed out that “in the context of the COVID situation, services responsible for protecting the population were also forced to protect themselves, because firefighters, police officers, soldiers and the like proved not to be immune to SARS-CoV-2, a fact that seems to be obvious, but had a direct impact on the continuity of operations.” Confirmed cases of infection were capable of putting entire firefighting and rescue units out of action.

Addressing the question of the universality of general security, he noted that it manifests itself, as it were, in the very threats to that security, since “the threats are relatively universal. The very generality of these threats, the possibility of their materialisation in virtually every condition of functioning of the state, in my opinion testifies, in a sense, to the universality of general security, not so much resulting from as connected with those threats.” The recent increased interest in these issues is grounded in practical security challenges, and more specifically in the practical challenges of general security, translating into challenges of national security. He added that this is a direction worth pursuing when studying the universality of general security.

**Krzysztof Drabik**, addressing the second question, said that it reflects “the semantic essence of general security”. He considered the question of “what lies behind this generality. Is it a generality of threats, or generality in the sense of subjects? And how does this relate to the category of universalism?” He referred positively to the previous speaker’s conception of the universality of threats, noting that “we live in a late-modern world, where we ourselves generate these threats, which – please note – become an element of this general security at least.” He expressed the concern that “by talking about the universality of threats and viewing general security in this way, we are sailing into wide uncharted waters with no specific direction when it comes to trying to classify this aspect of security, because in fact the multitude of

threats and those that are not defined as of today have not even been given names, let alone codified in law.” He gave the example of awareness of the risks associated with PM10 particle concentrations, noting that “at the time when we add this aspect of awareness [...] that is, axiological security resulting from professed values, we see a personal security crucial from the perspective of general security, by its nature encompassing a whole range of aspects of security as such.” He cited the human security aspect as the most interesting, and described the universality of general security itself as highly doubtful, including in terms of classification. “How do we retain from the taxonomy those areas that we are to understand as those we should be concerned with in the framework of general security?” He said that it was “by all means an open question”, where it was necessary to consider “whether we sometimes enter such areas where it is difficult to define this general security, and actually how we are to understand it”, while “the universality of the threats is itself subject to certain doubts.”

**Andrzej Pieczywok** shared his reflections on general security: “I have the impression that this generality means a sense of obligation. That is to say, this is the first such internal dilemma with which I am struggling, but in addition, if the debate concerns these issues, then there is the question of existence... The existentiality of the human being.” He recalled the words of Professor Suchodolski about who a human being is, and stressed that the universality of general security should lie in the fact that it is primarily about people, and not the structures they have created. He pointed to the example of the State Office of Physical Education and Military Preparation (PUWFIPW), established after Poland regained its independence following the First World War, which dealt with issues of defence preparation and physical education at the same time, where we created certain institutions aimed at making a person in the re-emerging reality of the Republic both fit and secure. A person’s fitness is related to their safety, and I mean here physical fitness, but also intellectual fitness.” The resurgent society after 1918, unsure of its security, tried to act in both spheres (physical and intellectual), and thereby the duty to engage in defence applied to all institutions – education, workplaces, and government offices – rather than resting only on the shoulders of the armed forces. The speaker said that he is currently under the impression that “security is left only to the uniformed services”. Also, higher education institutions dealing with questions of security are focused on definitions and on considerations of whether “‘generality’ means compulsory or perhaps non-compulsory participation” in protective and defensive undertakings. He said that education “should teach awareness”, but that this has lost out to, among other things, the teaching of definitions and

descriptions of situations. "We teach many different descriptions of situations and their understanding, naturally, because this is that kind of field. You and I have also witnessed certain such situations especially. Maybe reviewing a qualifying work where the description ends is a domain above understanding." For this reason, the Polish education system requires some rebuilding. The speaker here stressed the importance of the present symposium, pointing out that its important task should be to identify the role of "universal education at the core of human development". With proper education, a person should be able "to read threats, not just predict them". Here he pointed out the superiority of the Scandinavian system over the Polish one, which has lost its sensitivity in favour of the "licensed" detection of threats. "Please note that if in scientific research the Scandinavian education system wins against ours in every respect, then maybe we could try to do something at the fundamentals of a person's education and regarding their sensitivity to events. Because we have lost that sensitivity. It seems that we are prepared for the detection of threats in a 'definitional' manner, because it is the definition that is most important, and not necessarily its understanding." The speaker concluded with an example of his own experience from field visits, during which he asks regional administration employees often uncomfortable questions related to the practical implementation of defence tasks carried out by local authorities, including on educational matters: "asking questions precisely about the universality of a person's education and the demonstration of that, and matters relating to threats, are issues that should somehow be imposed somewhere down there at the bottom." The last example concerned people's personal security in light of the lack of first aid skills on the part of most people who formally ought to be trained in providing it. It was only an accident that resulted in the running of a first aid course, conducted by paramedics: "I will tell you that, if someone suddenly fainted... and there was such a situation in a Wroclaw school that a student fainted and no one was able to give him first aid. I am talking about universality now, so we learned to give first aid, once upon a time, maybe health and safety regulations, etc. etc. In our country, a certain universality is lacking. Related to human safety, even with such simple things as giving first aid to someone. Then the teachers invited paramedics to teach how to react if someone faints, what to do in such a situation."

**Marian Żuber** confirmed the views of the previous speakers on how universality in general security should be perceived. However, he expressed a somewhat distinct view concerning the actual defining of general security: "I, however, perceive general security as something that should be seen as the result of a certain dynamic of actions and generally of human activities,

and of the challenges and threats which arise in connection with those activities, and which are shaped by new emerging processes. As we see from experience, when a certain threat materialises, this is when we focus on that particular threat. And in fact, most of our activities, most of our energy is directed towards actions aimed primarily at countering such threats. Speaking of general security, just as security itself is defined as a state and a process, general security is also obviously treated as a state.” The speaker referred to the words of Professor Bogdan Michailiuk, who in summing up the first topic referred to security as a state and a process. “I believe that it should be seen as a constantly nascent process. There is a film directed by Christopher Nolan with excellent music by Hans Zimmer, called *Interstellar*, if any of you have watched it, you will surely remember. There, the problem of feeding humanity arises. The Earth is ending, life on Earth is ending, as crop-destroying diseases develop. People are unable to counteract this. I will not talk about the plot further, but this is a problem at the present time. Food security is obviously an area of interest, but we don’t yet see it. We do not perceive this problem because we feel completely safe in this respect. There is no threat at the moment, but Christopher Nolan’s film shows what might happen in the future.” **Dr Żuber** then referred to an important event in Polish history – the 1997 floods. “I would also like to recall the year 1997, I experienced the ‘flood of the millennium’ in Wrocław. The whole of Poland was focused on the flood, many different drills were organised, and conferences on the subject. Later we had an epidemic, the whole of Poland was dealing with the epidemic. These are the dynamic threats, challenges that arise in a dynamic way, and are related to human activity. Today we have the problem of cybersecurity, but I also believe that I am an element of general security, because in fact it concerns all citizens. General security should therefore be viewed, I believe, as a process, one that is dynamically changing and results from the challenges and threats emerging in our environment.” Due to time constraints related to the overlap between the time of the symposium and teaching time, the speaker then went on to address the third issue: “What are the key needs of scientific research in the area of general security that should be realised?” He recalled the earlier words of Professor Andrzej Pieczywok, who had mentioned, among others, the Act on defences, which replaced a 1967 law on the general duty to defend the Republic, pointing out that “certainly the law, which is really about military security, state defence security, also has reference to general security.” He further expressed the hope that this law would be better prepared than the law on the “Polish Deal”, and that “it will not bring chaos to our defence system and the state security system in general. Professor

Pieczywok referred to a colleague who organised training related to civil self-defence. Well there is, after all, a 1993 ministerial order on general civil self-defence, arising from an even earlier law on the universal duty to defend the homeland. And this is a regulation that prepares citizens to provide general security, to provide it themselves in a situation where the effect of some threat is compounded. Local and central government, services, and crisis management together will not be able to help everyone. This is understandable, as we then simply have a wave-like build-up of threats. The year 1997, as I mentioned, the flood in Wrocław: here you could see action by the public, and citizens should be prepared for this.” Dr Żuber, referring again directly to the content of the third question, “which matters should be researched”, said that “improving the system for preparing the population for self-defence is such a very significant element, a very important element that should be identified in the future as one where research should be directed; but above all, actions – and what Professor Pieczywok said about his colleague being admonished and told that after all he should perhaps deal with something completely different from general self-defence.” The speaker concluded that while this is the first issue, the second is civil defence. He stressed that activity in this area is envisioned for a time of war, but even then it is necessary to provide general security. “If civil defence functions poorly, as it does now in my assessment, then in the future too all the services will not be able to cope. The fire service will not be able to extinguish all fires. For this we will also need civil defence action as a form of action by the population. In my opinion these are the two most significant issues that should be dealt with in future research on general security.”

**Bogdan Michailiuk** referred in his summing up to the terms relating to security. “We recognise that security has systematically expanded its boundaries as civilisation has developed. And considering at the very least that we formerly understood and perceived security primarily as the maintenance of military capability. You will certainly agree with me that security served primarily the defence of the vital interests of a particular social group. Referring to the second question, it is also necessary to strive to ensure general security by improving systems. I will mention here such a system, the National Firefighting and Rescue System. But I will also mention, for example, a system that has proven itself at this moment in Ukraine, that is, the national system of contamination detection and alarms; there the first situation during the period of general defence was the sounding of the alarm, the sirens howling. And it seems to me that the most important thing is what the professor here very

rightly highlights, to get the message to the public, so that the public have knowledge about at least the signals and the alarm system, that is, these signals also and the warning messages, that which relates at least to the prime ministerial order of 7 January 2013; that, as it were, fits into all of this.” The chairman of the debate then moved on to the legal regulations mentioned by the speakers in light of the new act of parliament, reporting regretfully that he was unable to find positive aspects in it for the area of general security. “I have taken a look at this [new] law. Unfortunately, there is nothing about this topic [general security] there at all. As for this law, which replaces the 1967 law, it does much that is bad. If we are talking about general security, the law simply does not address the subject at all. Let us hope that the executive orders will. Let us hope that something appears: an ‘Act on protection of the population and civil defence’, formerly ‘Act on protection of the population and rescue services’. I would like to tell you that it has been in preparation since May 2009. It did not see the light of day in 2020, it was put back on the shelf because someone decided that its time was yet to come. There is no time. Let us look at the situation as it is in Ukraine at the moment; there is simply no time if we and our society are not to pay the consequences here. If we are to protect, if we are to address these issues and these concepts, and also regulations, and in particular laws, there must be some step forward, because it seems to me that talking about a multitude of things here will not do any good. But we are here to do just that, to raise these issues.” **Dr Michailiuk** then recalled that it was time to address the third question, to which Professor Marian Żuber had already referred: “What are the key needs of scientific research in the field of general security, and at the same time the limits on the dissemination of the results of such research; and what is the role of research conducted over the space of years and of statistical research, but also of disciplinary research.”

**Andrzej Pieczywok** began his answer to the third question by presenting an important sequence of events related to security research. “The debate is very important, we are talking about security in relation to scientific research. If we want to be very serious people and study certain phenomena and processes, we should do it methodologically prepared, but also responsibly.” The speaker pointed out that “very often in the public space it is still claimed that the uniformed services are responsible for security. This is a very dangerous statement, and it results not only from unfamiliarity with the law, because today we see in Ukraine that people are returning there more often than emigrating. As far as men are concerned, this means there is a sense of some community, a sense of certain values that are placed above the life of a



person. Hence, I also mentioned the issue of awareness. I believe that we do not teach this and do not try to learn it, or we learn it in the wrong way.” **Dr Pieczywok** then pointed out that “a person’s awareness is not only education, but also practical action. Turkey is such a fine place of reference; residential blocks are built somewhere where there may be an earthquake, and in those blocks there must be someone who can direct a rescue operation. There must be a person responsible for giving first aid. I believe that we should build in our society certain good practices, which exist on the outside. I have in mind not only the Turkish example, but an example that speaks exactly about what to research, how to describe the results of research, because there is a problem with describing such results, as it is not only a quantitative issue that is important for us who study certain phenomena, but we say what the research contributes and what practical application it has.” The speaker then moved on to a burning problem of Polish science, namely that papers are written to gain points rather than to be of use, which he described as the “Polish barn”, and the tendency to follow current trends or fashions. “You yourselves are experiencing all of this, the so-called Polish ‘point-itis’. Because I call it Polish. Other countries are learning and saying that it is worthwhile to have some kind of ‘barn’. I’m sorry, ‘exposing the barns’ and activating a publication, on our ministerial list there will be 100 points for that, so that everyone in the barn can make their mark. So I’m talking about practicality, not a campaign of secrecy, because this is like a campaign. Today, unfortunately, competition is something very necessary, but presumably more so in sport than in science. We are talking about documenting something of great value. If now this third issue that the professor wanted to raise, the universality, including of security research, does not meet with favour. After all, if we look at your universities or mine, this universality is not practised. We, as publishers, also try to publish the results of research. I want to draw your attention to one more point. Well, like you, I am a reviewer of various qualification works. Please note that in these works there is little reference to anyone’s research on human security. Most often there is the author’s own research, because it is a requirement to conduct such research in qualification works of this type. We very often do not read and do not find our bearings; we don’t want to. Perhaps, or perhaps there are other simple reasons, where we do not try to document something that has been researched and we want it to find a reflection again.” He ended his speech: “The same applies to public debate. I would like to end by adding that I am also an observer of public debates concerning human security. How many people there are who participate in these debates who practically... I don’t want to judge them, but I

get the impression that the participants care not so much about security as they do about participating in the public debate and thereby realising their image: promoting themselves as a person. So I want to go on talking about the foundations. What is the normal foundation of human existence? People have certain fashions. Fashions for clothes, a fashion for healthy eating. I believe that the fashion for security in public debate is just that – a fashion. Every fashion passes, but fashions as such do not. This is a fashion that concerns our existence, but in very different dimensions.

**Krzysztof Drabik**, referring to the third question, noted that “security should be identified with science, and not just general security. In general, the category of security is closely coupled with scientific learning and with such a multidisciplinary holistic approach, a comparative approach, which is highlighted in this question.” He cited the views of British sociologist Anthony Giddens, who says that “today, in late modern society, we refer to expert systems and *de facto* to the results of scientific research. Today, science lays down this basis, the foundations for the possibility of shaping security in the face of the threats affecting us. Thus it is hard not to talk about science, except that I would like to refer to a certain comparison. There is a paradigm in cosmology that says that the universe is expanding, and by analogy to that paradigm, one might say that the space of security is expanding. We are faced with an increasing number of threats, and threats that are not at all obvious, arising precisely from our interference in ecosystems, in the natural processes of life. Thus humanity has a problem with itself; but here, at least, we have problems with a basic element of scientific learning, the principle of causality. Today, as this security space expands, scientists are having problems identifying cause-and-effect relationships which are, for one thing, non-obvious and multi-level.” The speaker stressed that “science is developing, but colloquially speaking, one might say that it is unable to see the wood for the trees. And that applies also to the security question. Speaking of general security, the shaping of that security, not only science was referred to, although that is a key pillar. What has already been said, as mentioned by Professor Pieczywok, education, teaching, learning, upbringing, including the formation of an awareness of security, an awareness of personal security, and there are also the media. The media which provide us – which should provide us – with reliable information, and not just use sensationalism to increase viewing figures. Finally, the security culture. Building, shaping a public awareness, an awareness of being secure. So often is it announced that there is turbulence around us, in the

environment, it seems to me that these elements are important and need to be talked about, discussed, among other things in the context of the creation of general security.”

**Paweł Gromek** began by referring to the speech of Professor Andrzej Pieczywok, who had spoken of “the translation of the results of scientific research into the practice of the functioning of society, the local community, the human individual, which also seems to be a result of legislative processes at least”. The speaker then shared his own experience, “precisely related to one of my publications, in which I tried to emphasise the practicality of applications of research results, their use to facilitate the functioning of public administration, services, inspectorates, guards.” **Dr Gromek** had received a review saying that “in the case of the United States, on this particular subject, these arguments are mistaken, for the reason that the American authorities listen to American scientists, and this is simply all well known.” The speaker added: “However, with regard to the approach taken here in Poland and at least the COVID-related situations, some reflection is currently being given to the state of civil defence, which, in the spirit of the Act on defence of the homeland, will soon cease to function.” He noted that “this leads to a specific concern about the current state of knowledge being translated into practice.” Turning to the issue of the needs of scientific research in the field of general security “in terms of thematic areas, taking into account what is happening today, also on the legislative side”, the speaker suggested paying attention to “the issue of the coordination of actions to protect the population, including humanitarian aid, which seems to resonate strongly especially nowadays in view of the phenomenon of humanitarian aid given to refugees from Ukraine in our country.” **Dr Gromek** added that “drawing on foreign literature, it seems obvious in such a situation to create refugee centres, refugee camps. In Poland, *de facto* not a single one has been created, taking into account international standards at least. Why, to a large extent, did Poles absorb those in need of help even by accepting them into their homes? The question of coordination, the study of this phenomenon, and perhaps the suggestion of ways to use this manifestation of security culture in Poland for organised activities that might also be undertaken and coordinated by the public administration seems to me to be an important need of a scientific nature. Moreover, the integration of rescue, the aforementioned bill on protection of the population and states of natural disasters, that is, this distinctive successor to the bill on civil defence, takes into account national transformations.” The speaker noted, however, that this is based on media reports, as the draft document has not yet reached the Central Fire Service School. He stated that from currently available media

reports, it appears that “the bill provides for the transformation of the national firefighting and rescue system into a national rescue system. However, some matters are unknown: in what dimension? to what extent? We are yet to find out.” Dr Gromek pointed out that “given the specific organisational and procedural environment associated with the establishment of the national rescue and firefighting system, in many circles not everyone liked these measures, especially the measures that gave the head of rescue operations powers that were even above the level of a government department, and indeed were assigned by way of an order of the Council of Ministers.” Another issue raised by the speaker was the proposed changes to the Act on crisis management and other laws relating to that subject. **Dr Gromek** noted that “the Government Security Centre, which played one of the first roles in developing appropriate legal measures, has underlined the validity of applying a process-based approach to critical infrastructure protection, and more broadly to crisis management. This is grounded in the approach to security in general. From a citizen’s point of view, I suspect that apart from academics in the security science community and our students, people are unlikely to pay attention to the safety nets in crisis management plans. From their perspective, what is important is that in case of any threat, under any circumstances of the functioning of the state and the functioning of the local community, society, the individual person, no matter what, help should be provided immediately. This forces, or not so much forces as justifies, a move away from a linear and institutional approach – based on the principle that if there are fires, it’s the fire department’s job – to a process-based approach. Fire protection as a process and its constituent detailed sub-processes, which is very much in line with the essence of security science in the systemic approach, since processes understood according to the process-based approach can be structures of the process of learning in the course of the study of security systems.” The speaker then referred to the speech of Professor Krzysztof Drabik, who had mentioned the issue of the universality of threats. Adopting the words of the previous speaker, **Dr Gromek** said that it was a case of “not seeing the wood for the trees. Especially as one increasingly gets the impression that issues are being raised about the domino effect, the cascade effect of the development of threats, a network approach to threat development where it is increasingly difficult to say outright that a threat is a matter of general security, or economic security, or military security. We can see that in the context of military threats, if only considering what is happening in Ukraine and with the movement of migrants, there is a significant impact on epidemic security in Poland at least, but not only this. Also public security,

not to mention the general security that we are discussing. This intermingling of the specific features of different threats, or the manifestation of different features of threats in case of specific events, causes significant difficulties in our scientific exploration of the matter of general security. This even represents an inevitable direction for the development of research in the discipline of security science.” Approaching the end of his speech, the speaker referred to the findings of Professor Cieślarczyk’s research team, which some time ago performed an evaluation of the crisis management system, giving it a C+ on the academic grading scale. **Dr Gromek** noted that “Professor Cieślarczyk and his team drew attention to a certain aspect, targeting their research in this case at crisis management, although it can be applied more broadly to the study of general security, national security. Important is the approach to factors of identification and evaluation of the factors which control the functioning of security systems, and which seem to elude legal and formal regulations.” The speaker emphasised that “we are talking here about the operational threats inherent in these systems due to the very diverse and extensive psychological, social, technical and cultural determinants of organisation. Closely corresponding to this is the issue of operational risk and the assessment of that risk in the area of general security, which is also worth emphasising, considering the development of scientific research in the area of general security.” **Dr Gromek** added that “taking into account the specific nature of the research conducted at the Central Fire Service School, for example”, but not limited to that institution, he sees “a link between the results of that research or, more broadly, scientific research conducted in the discipline of security science in the context of general security, and the scientific research carried out in security engineering.” The speaker wished to emphasise “the validity of using security engineering tools to solve problems of a social nature, problems that are related to or embedded in the academic discipline of security science.” He said that “in this way, it may be easier to operationalise, to concretise the determinants of the functioning of the systems of general security, its particular systems – the Central Fire Service headquarters, the National Medical Rescue system, the emergency notification system, the national alarm system – in order to develop research related to general security on the basis of case studies, and to provide new results of such research.”

**Janusz Ropski** began addressing the third question by posing the question: “What are the concrete key needs for conducting methodological research?” He went on: “I represent a university that mainly focuses on education”, as it mainly trains teachers. He noted that “science is language, a subject of research, methods, techniques, research tools.” He pointed

out that in the American approach “certain things are approached much more easily because [researchers] don't understand that history and [its] significance.” He stressed that it is all the more important for Polish researchers “to fight their way through with this [...] research, with methodology”. The speaker pointed out that where research is commissioned and paid for by politicians, the results are expected to affect the latter’s popularity ratings, which does not help the scientists. “We have excellent discussions within our teams, we see the problems, we see the threats. We scientists have to take care of these popularity ratings ourselves. That is, how difficult it is sometimes to break through all the vast amount of information of various kinds that is served up in the mass media. And I am convinced that a politician doesn’t read, a politician knows. And overall, there is a problem with this scientific issue. What are these factors that I would see from an educational perspective as regards these challenges, these threats?” **Dr Ropski** cited a book by Professor Andrzej Pieczywok, *Education in the Era of Challenges and Threats*, where the author points out that “teaching standards in schools and universities are not changing as fast as the world is changing.” The speaker added that “we need to adapt quickly to a changing world. It is always very important to develop some kind of vision, that is, on the one hand we need to talk about a vision for the development of society, but on the other hand we need to adjust our methodological assumptions.” He recalled that the previous speaker, Professor Drabik, had spoken “very nicely about Giddens and the industrial society, and it is very important to adjust the criteria that serve to determine the degree of social development and the shape of future education. This is incredibly difficult, because incredible re-evaluations are taking place that we need to notice, for one thing. Secondly, in doing any kind of research, we are always four years late, because by the time we define the threats, by the time we develop the methodology, carry out the research and are in a position to disseminate it, I suspect it requires a minimum of about four years. And now we should look at the world of contemporary education globally, and it cannot be separated from global trends, where we have very many different challenges, including demographic, financial, technological, environmental and health-related ones, where our modern labour market is changing; we also have different personal needs and preferences, personal ones. And now there always seems to be such a key question when it comes to education and research methodology. First, who is to decide what schools teach today and how they function, and what kind of education will be practised in them in the broad sense of university learning? What should be the point of reference?” The speaker added that, in his view, “no one knows today

what the world will look like in a few years' time or in the next decade, and what skills we will need, or what today's pupils and students will need when they start their professional lives, especially with this changing society, and how useful the knowledge that is in textbooks today will be, and how quickly we ourselves will have to amend the textbooks, or disseminate the research we do, because this is very important at present as far as methodology is concerned. We have a methodology in the social sciences and we are able to recognise these dangers. I teach students to think heuristically, that is, to think in such a way that on the one hand they can draw conclusions, build holistic concepts, and on the other hand they know how to put forward a hypothesis or thesis, which becomes a theory at that point, because then we can more quickly verify it. The ability to think critically, analytically, leads to the development of methodology." **Dr Ropski** expressed a hope for "more such interdisciplinary meetings, where everyone will at least notice something new. But on the other hand, it will always be possible to accept this and reflect on what we do, to show this very research." The speaker added that "knowledge is gained from reading books of wisdom. There is no other option. Books of wisdom are written based on well-conducted research. A monograph is, above all, good methodology."

**Summing up** the debate, **Bogdan Michailiuk** noted that ensuring an undisturbed existence requires a constant effort to combat ever new, sometimes unexpected and unprecedented threats and their consequences, for which we must be prepared. He also agreed with the speakers who had said that it is important to learn from historical experience, including foreign experience, not necessarily our own experience in the context of general security. "Certainly, comparativism also plays an important role, since comparing existing states of affairs is a universal or utilitarian method. Nevertheless, one should take care not to allow a certain chaos, a certain haste, creep in, which can lead to a certain confusion, that is, a disordered existence. The key needs of scientific research in the area of general security should primarily centre around the creation of canons of laws dedicated to the most essential elements, that is, first of all, the protection of the population, that is, the human being, but also the environment, property, animals, cultural goods, the environment." The chairman also underlined matters related to legislative procedures, that is, a weakness in terms of legal regulations on the protection of the population, civil defence, or civil protection and rescue, as well as such proposed laws as the bill on civil security. He added with regard to the "Act on protection of the population and civil defence" that "the proposal was under consideration from May 2009 until 2020 and was put back on the shelf. This does not lead to good hopes in this area. I

therefore think that – referring, as I observe in the eyes of experts, to the question of the Act on crisis management – that law slightly distorts the issues that we are discussing. We are talking about protection of the population, civil defence. The Act on crisis management cannot be interpreted as encouraging us to do something in that regard.”

**Waldemar Kitler added in conclusion:** “It is magnificent that among the group of experts there are humanists, hence this topic of discussion; I am very pleased that the issue of human security has been raised, related to the human person, the human being, without detracting from the participation of representatives of those more practical, solid elements of security, of security engineering. Well, the words were heard here at the very beginning from the lips of some of you, Professor Gromek also used these expressions – the security of people, the security of citizens. Let us note that it happens that, often in haste, we use interchangeably expressions that, despite their relatedness, have different legal meanings. This does not apply to Professor Pawel Gromek, but applies in general, because I encounter in publications and speeches the often frivolous use of these expressions, interchangeably as if by way of alternation, once one, once the other, as if they meant the same thing. Gentlemen, you have alluded to issues of legal regulation, and so I will also address that, in just a couple of words. Well, we must bear in mind that our legislation carefully and prudently uses the expressions ‘human security’, the ‘security of citizens’. Providing security for citizens does not mean the same as providing it for people, or vice versa. If we speak of people, then we mean, as in the Act on crisis management, the safety of people, their life, health, property of significant extent necessary for survival, and the environment in which people live, but above all life and health. On the other hand, in the case of the security of citizens, I believe that it is more about protecting rights, freedoms, a person’s civic, political nature; the individual, who is a needle in this great haystack, who must have his rights and freedoms, which will not be restricted and will not be derogated. We are then talking about the security of citizens as members of the society of a given state, with specific rights, freedoms and duties, as defined in the constitution and laws. On the other hand, it is indeed impossible to define everything, and we feel this deficiency. I believe, however, that we have carried on our discussion without establishing the terms that we are using. But I think that this is a lesson for the future also, that we should first propose to each other what we mean by a given notion, and only then go on to discuss it. This is by no means to say that the honourable gentlemen did not take care to keep to that, within the framework of the now well established and widely acknowledged concept of general



security. Here we have the situation that I have also heard that there is no definition of general security in the law. It turns out that perhaps there need not be a definition as such, but in such a purposeful approach we can perceive the concern of the legislature and then of other bodies in the executive sphere, even at the level of ministerial orders and lower-level instruments, that nevertheless care is given to this general security, and the lead character in all of this: people, their lives, and health, and thus a person as a physical being, whose life and health denote not only a physical condition, but also psychophysical and intellectual fitness. Or at least, such a comfortable mental situation, we might say, which the person experiences in the environment in which he or she lives. Thus, what was said by Professor Ropski, for example, is also important. On the other hand, we can also seek in the actions of legislators certain steps regarding the understanding of general security, if only to be able to distinguish it from public security or public order. It is the case that if we took some of the definitions or understandings of public security in other paradigms that legal scholars present, for example, then in principle all of our definitions of national security, state security, public security, and many of them could be discarded, because the definition of public security is universal. Such a linguistic analysis is not always a sufficient way of arriving at an understanding of certain things, since as Professor Bogdan Michailiuk said at the outset, with military security we have a clear indication of what it concerns, with radiation or radiological security we know immediately what it is specifically about, as it is made concrete in the very notion, in the name. But 'general' and 'public' are synonyms. Publicly, meaning to everyone, universally. In this regard, there is still another side of the coin, which means that we agree on what meanings we assign to certain phenomena, states of affairs, such as public and general security, because it cannot be done otherwise. Just as in general people communicate using names that everyone understands, including in the legal system. If we look at the Criminal Code, Chapter 20, offences against general security; here the legislators are concerned, of course not only in the context of the Criminal Code, not all cases, but here they indicate what goods... let us return to the first of the questions: What goods are subject to protection under general security? According to Article 183, one who causes an event that endangers the life or health of many people or property of great extent... we have the character of this event, that is, what is protected: life, health, property. Another example: one who causes the immediate danger of an event as specified [...] in that article, but one more: one who causes danger to the life or health of many people or property of great extent [...] causing some specified consequences. That is to say, the expression 'general

security’ is already used in the law, it is a term that has a legal meaning. It is the same with public order, and there it is also about protected goods, but from the point of view of a person’s criminal activity, and here it is more about protecting, saving the good that is life and health. This is an important issue, and it is also worth noting incidentally that we can boast of a book, but a book I wrote with Professor Aleksandra Skrabacz, *Security of the Civilian Population: Concept, Organisation and Duties in Times of Peace, Crisis and War*. I believe that it is also beneficial to look at these texts, because this is one of the voices in the discussion on how to understand security, including – among others – general security.”

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